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London & Area Edition

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JULY/AUGUST 2019
London & Area Edition

Tips for running season!

Submitted by Neurochangers

With the weather warmer now, outdoor running is becoming a more common alternative to maintaining physical activity for many individuals and fitness enthusiasts. With that in mind, here are some tips on how to have a productive running season:

1. Define your running goals

Whether you are trying to achieve a faster mile, or beat your marathon time from last year, or you're simply trying to become more physically active, your goals will determine how you should approach running season. Ask yourself why you want to run and how you want to get better as a runner.

2. Practice a balanced training program

Spread your weekly running volume between easy, shorter runs and longer runs. Make strength training a part of your program, as this will improve your overall running economy and prevent injuries over your running season.

3. Avoid training errors

Training errors include adding too much mileage too fast and too soon. Start your running program with more short or easy runs to gradually build up your conditioning. Adding 1 km per week is an acceptable rate for most runners. Another error is not incorporating core and general strength training into your program. You must get stronger to run better. Lastly, runners who do not warm up properly are more prone to injury.

4. Be realistic when faced with an injury

Take a step back if you become injured. Seek medical advice regarding rest or modification to your training program. Your physiotherapist or athletic trainer can address any strength or mobility issues that may have caused the injury. Running with an injury is not usually recommended, especially when it alters your normal running pattern.

5. Make appropriate lifestyle changes

Dedicate daily habits to improving your wellness. This will make your training program more effective in the long run. In addition to being well-hydrated, nutrition is important for fueling a runner's body. Lastly, sufficient and restful sleep is important for recovery. Practice self care that helps reduce stress and brings joy to your life.

Physiotherapy is a great resource for both competitive and recreational runners. Your physiotherapist can help you achieve your running goals safely, maintain your wellness, and manage any injuries that may arise. Contact us at Neurochangers today for an assessment! 519-204-0200 or mari@neurochangers.ca.

www.neurochangers.ca

Want to stay healthy and strong during outdoor running season? Neurochangers has some tips, including clearly defining your running goals...

thelineup

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Special thanks to Matt Hiscox for the cover photo.

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What's happening at CTC?

Contributions by CTC Obstacles

They came, they competed, and they conquered. CTC Obstacles held its NINJA Warrior recreational competition on June 8 and 9, and the result was some exciting action – at all age groups – throughout the weekend. More than 80 competitors turned out, and medals and prizes were awarded for the top finishers.

For the first time, 5- and 6-year-olds competed at the facility, tackling a great course created just for them. Meanwhile, preteens (11-12), teens (13-15), young adults (16-17), pro (18-39) and masters (40+) all competed on the Saturday, and the kids (6-8) and mature kids (9-10) age groups competed on the Sunday.

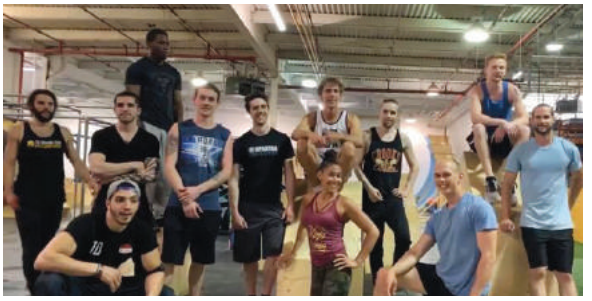
"We had a great group come from Aspire Climbing that really pushed our course hard, coming away with a few medals! Many of our NINJA KIDS also received medals," CTC Obstacles said in a recap post on Facebook. "We added a few 'surprise' obstacles that no one had tried before to keep it exciting! The first course was fun and fast and the second course was more challenging! Can't wait for all the NINJAS to continue their journeys in training and come together again!"

What's coming up at the facility? An exciting renovation to the gym will include new rigs and a larger spider climb, as well as additions and new set up to the parkour area! They will also be expanding their NINJA KIDS program in September. During these classes, participants use the obstacles, as well as, battleropes, sleds, sandbags, slam balls and more to build the strength and mobility needed to tackle the numerous ninja warrior obstacles at CTC. Stay tuned to the website (www.ctcobstacles.ca) for more information. CTC Obstacles plans to have a competitive team in the near future, which will travel to some of the closer gyms that hold competitions.

CTC Obstacles offers a unique way for kids to be active and accomplish impressive sporting feats in the gym. Athletes who compete in team sports enjoy the facility, as it complements their other training. By hitting the CTC gym, these athletes increase their power, stamina, balance and core strength.

At the same time, individual competitors are particularly drawn to the NINJA Warrior and parkour lifestyle. Not a team sport kind of kid? CTC Obstacles might be exactly what you're looking for. Have you been inspired by the show 'American Ninja Warrior Junior' (or the original American Ninja Warrior)? If so, and you live in London and area, CTC Obstacles is the place to train.

www.ctcobstacles.ca



CTC Obstacles, London's first (and only) obstacle gym, held a recreational competition June 8 & 9, welcoming more than 70 NINJA Warrior competitors who displayed some impressive skills throughout the weekend.

SportsXpress Network

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CENTREFIELD SPORTS

Canadians drafted, camps highlight summer

Submitted by Centrefield Sports

With summer finally upon us, there's no better place to gear up, stay in shape, and continue to get your time in on the field than at Centrefield Sports.

Whether you and your team are searching for extra time on the diamond, gridiron, pitch, field or in the gym or batting cages, or you are looking for a venue where the weather is always guaranteed, London's largest indoor baseball facility is the perfect place to suit all of your needs. Reduced rates have already begun, and they will run until Labour Day.

Along with all the options indoors all-year long, Centrefield Sports is also hosting three outdoor camps this summer.

Owen Diodati, a catcher with the Great Lake Canadians (GLC) program, was drafted by the Toronto Blue Jays in the 29th round of the 2019 First Year Player Draft in June. He's committed to the University of Alabama next fall.

The facility's summer camps offer an array of different sporting options – and plenty of fun and games – while keeping the focus centred around baseball. All of the camps take place at Byron Optimist Complex. The first runs from July 8 to 12, the second between July 15 and 19, and the third – a four-day camp – from August 12 to 15.

Centrefield Sports is also proud to be the home of the elite amateur Great Lake Canadians program, and would like to acknowledge and congratulate Owen Diodati and Noah Myers, who were selected in Major League Baseball's draft at the beginning of June. Both players were chosen by their home-country Toronto Blue Jays, in the 29th and 30th rounds of the selection process, respectively.

Noah Myers, a former GLC player, was chosen by the Toronto Blue Jays in the 30th round of Major League Baseball's June Draft this year. The outfielder is committed to the University of South Carolina.

Diodati, a catcher from Niagara Falls, is finishing up his final season with the GLC organization in the Canadian Premier Baseball League before heading to the University of Alabama. Myers, an outfielder from Wyoming and a GLC alumnus, has completed his tenure at Wabash Valley Community College and is committed to the University of South Carolina. The pair were two of just 25 Canadians chosen in this year's draft.

www.centrefieldsports.com

Baseball and BBQ!

Submitted by Lou Dawg's Southern BBQ

Lou Dawg's Southern BBQ opened its first location in Toronto in 2009. That very first summer, we put together a Coed softball team. The next year, we had three teams. The following year, we had nine! Some of those teams include 'The Lou Dawg's Pulled Porkers,' 'Po Boys,' 'Mighty Loutines,' 'UnderDawgs,' 'Big Dawgs,' 'Meat Sliders,' 'Dirt Dawgs,' and 'Dawg the Bounty Hunters,' Creative team names, to be sure!

As we opened Lou Dawgs Hamilton in 2016, we added another coed team with our friends at Collective Arts Brewery. In Uptown Waterloo, meanwhile, we added a men's team, and in London we now have FOUR registered Coed teams – and counting! Current teams include 'The Lou Dawgs Smokin Bases,' Smokin' Barrels,' 'Dick Vaselino and the Smooth Operators' and a team of London first responders (emergency department nurses, technicians, paramedics, and residents) called 'Quit Your Pitchin!'

In other words, Coed softball has been a much a part of the Lou Dawg's Story as our delicious BBQ and awesome live music! Coed softball builds community and provides the athletes and staff the opportunity to form lasting friendships over the years.

We will definitely be scheduling an annual multi-city Lou Dawg's Softball Tournament for years to come. As we grow, so will this softball tournament!

If you have a community team (in any sport) that needs a place to call home with delicious team food/drink specials, friendly staff and great live music – please email softball@loudawgs.com we would be happy to share our home with you.

www.loudawgs.com

At Lou Dawg's Southern BBQ, Coed softball is as much a part of the what we do as delicious Southern BBQ and live music! In London, the restaurant now has four coed softball teams as part of our family (and there's always room for more – softball@loudawgs.com). We will be hosting our annual multi city tournament in London in the fall.

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Athletes and consent to travel

WALK-IN NOTARY

Submitted by Walk-In Notary

It's summer and you're set to head south of the border for your team's tournament. There are so many things to pack to make sure that your athlete is ready to go – equipment, uniform, snacks, sunscreen, etc. But are you forgetting the most important thing of all?

If your athlete is travelling without both parents, consider obtaining a consent to travel letter. This letter can simplify border crossings for minor children who do not have both parents present. While a consent to travel letter is not legally required, it can give you extra peace of mind, informing customs officials that your child does have the permission of both parents to travel outside of Canada.

With increasing worries globally about human trafficking and custodial rights, customs officials in both Canada and the United States look for consent to travel letters to confirm parental permission to travel. From past personal experience, even athletes traveling as a team – and only months or weeks away from the age of eighteen – have been asked to produce a consent to travel letter when crossing without their parents into the United States for tournaments.

At Walk-In Notary, we are happy to assist you with drafting or notarizing your consent to travel letter (or both). We are open Monday to Friday from 9-5 pm, and no appointment is necessary. You can download a consent to travel form from the Government of Canada's website at: https://travel.gc.ca/travelling/children/consent-letter

If you use the above form, simply fill out the information and bring it into our office to sign and have it notarized. Please bring valid photo identification with you. The cost to notarize a consent to travel form is $39.95 plus HST. If you would like us to draft the consent to travel letter, the cost (including notarization) is $69.99 plus HST. If you mention the Promo Code 'SportsXpress' you can receive a $10 discount for drafting or notarizing a letter of consent to travel at Walk-In Notary.

If you have a full team of minor athletes travelling without parents and would like us to notarize the entire team's forms or letters at once, please give us a call at 226-977-8245.

www.walkinnotary.ca

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Ladies slo-pitch alive and well

ACURA
ACURA WEST.CA

Contributions by Linda Eckert

It's a milestone year for the Acura West Angels, a ladies' slo-pitch team that has now been in existence for 10 years! The team, which consists of players ranging in age from their 20's to their 50's, is a 'mixed bag of talent,' according to Linda Eckert, one of the team's long-time players. Some have played for years, while others are new to the game. Regardless of tenure, the women all work together to improve – and they have fun doing it!

"Although the faces may have changed over the years, everyone maintains an 'Angel' status for life," says Eckert. "It's a sport, but you really become a ball family."

The Angels play their games on Thursday evenings at Slo-Pitch City in Dorchester. Over the years, the team has won league championships, but the focus remains on enjoying some 'downtime' away from hectic lives – and having fun with friends.

The fun is fully endorsed by Paul Jennery, the general manager at Acura West who is always happy to sponsor the team each summer.

"We proudly take the field sponsored by Acura West London, and Paul supports us whole-heartedly," says Eckert. "We've been fortunate to have called ourselves Acura West Angels for 10 years now with their support, and are looking forward to many more years of action playing the sport we love."

The Acura West Angels are celebrating 10 years this summer. Here, you can see the slo-pitch team in year 1 (left) and the newest version of the team – in 2019.

Ball season in full swing

Submitted by London Mens Baseball League

The LMBL's 27th season got off to a soggy start in 2019, with most teams not touching the diamond until May 20 – well after the originally planned start date of May 5. But the season quickly ramped up, and the league's 210+ players (aged 30 to 82) managed to get caught up quickly – with games being played at Labatt Memorial Park, Dan Pulham Stadium, and the St Marys Hall of Fame Diamond every Sunday.

Although most players in the league return to play year-after-year due to their enjoyment of getting back on the field and getting to play 'real' baseball, the league does accept new players each season to fill spots left open by players who retire or are required to stop playing for other reasons (work, family, etc.). Marco Desbiens (aka Gus) is one such 'new' player, who was drafted by the LMBL Expos for the 2019 season.

"After being away from baseball for 20+ years to raise a family and my work career, I was so excited to capture my youth again with the LMBL," said Desbiens. "Great teammates, a fun environment, and the perfect day to play ball on Sundays at Labatt Park. I just wish my body would cooperate more. But it will come around. I'm so glad I made the choice to play again."

As the season moves along, and teams jockey for playoff positioning, competitive rivalries develop. Last year's A champions, Aquarium Services, look strong again heading down the stretch, as do the always-tough Werewolves. In the B division, the Mets, Giants, and Cubs appear to be headed for a heated battle for the two spots eligible to move up into the A pool for 2020. A 17-game regular season schedule makes every win important. But, of course, in the end as long as there are cold beverages on a tailgate somewhere post-game, a few losses each year are more tolerable!

For more information about the London Mens baseball League, including access to player statistics and how to join, visit:

www.lmblbaseball.ca

Marco Desbiens has thoroughly enjoyed his return to the diamond in 2019 after two decades away. Playing in the London Mens Baseball League, he's recapturing his youth and having a great time doing it.

The Orioles of the LMBL had a successful third 'Pack the Park' day in June at Labatt Park, as family and friends took in some exciting baseball action.

Teaching Tincaps the fundamentals

By SportsXpress Team and photo by XGEN PHOTO

The London West Tincaps Minor Rookie team (b. 2011) is in good hands with their coach, Bob Caron. For starters, he's been around baseball for decades, and his first memorable coaching experience came alongside his father in 1973 when he coached a T-ball team. He also experienced coaching with the late Bob Stark (or, simply, 'Mr. Stark'), an LDBA Hall of Famer.

"My eldest son, Paul, played for Mr. Stark in 1997 and 1998, and I helped in 1998," said Caron. "And my youngest played for Mr. Stark in 2001."

In 2009, Caron and his wife, Pat, took over coaching that team, and today he's still coaching – at the youngest level within the West London Tincaps organization, the Minor Rookie squad.

"One of the best things about this age group is that they change so much from the beginning of the year to the end," said Caron. "The key things we work on at this level is 'where's the play?' and overall baseball IQ. We give them some basic rules to follow, but we also give them the confidence to adlib when needed."

This year's team, Caron says, is particularly enjoyable to coach because they're quite anxious to learn and try new things on the diamond.

"Helping the players to love baseball is one of my key goals every year, and this team is already moving in that direction. When practice is over, I've heard complaining because they want to keep playing," said Caron. "As far as competition, representing the LDBA in the OBA's is always one of our goals."

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Minor Peewees making strides

Contributions by Sean Jeffries and photo by coach Darrin Smith

Things got off to a good start this season for the North London Nationals Minor Peewee baseball team. The squad, which competes in the London District Baseball Association's (LDBA) Rep league, opened the year with a strong showing at their first tournament, in Dorchester, as they competed against teams from outside the region, including Bloordale, Chatham and Markham.

Following the Victoria Day weekend in May, the team then began its regular season schedule, and they've since been competing against area teams, including the London Badgers, London Tecumsehs, London West Tincaps, St. Thomas Cardinals, Ingersoll Ironbirds and Sarnia Braves. Along the way, the North London Minor Peewees have been improving – in all facets of the game.

North London Nationals Minor Peewee Team: Front row (left to right): Tyler Sanders, Chase Muir. Middle row: Harrison Howlett, Brett Humphries, Nick Smith, Turner Awad, Owen Shoemaker. Back row: Coach Chris Chant, Lachlan Chant, William Jeffries, Darius Brodt, Christian McCallum, Jack Willits, Coach Jim Humphries. Absent: Head Coach Sean Jeffries and Assistant Coach Darrin Smith

"We're always working on various baseball fundamentals, skills and strategies, like situational hitting, proper cut offs and run downs," says Sean Jeffries, the team's head coach. "And, of course, pitching, including pickoff moves, as well as generally building up the arm strength of our players."

The Nationals play their home games at the North London Athletic Fields, with Diamond 3 being their home diamond. The team is led by a few coaches – including Jeffries, who has been coaching both baseball and hockey for seven years.

"We're improving across the board," Jeffries says. "Whether it's hitting, pitching, or our teamwork skills. We're definitely looking forward to a strong year and a fun finish to the season."

This Tincaps Minor Rookie squad has a good chance to do so, as the team has experienced a lot of success on the field this summer. In fact, they didn't lose during their first 11 games of the season, winning 10 and tying one to put them in first place in their division heading into late June.

In other words, there's a lot of talent on this Tincaps team. And there's a lot of coaching talent, too. But Caron doesn't go it alone. He's helped, not only by his wife, but by friends Darryl Hayton and Jeff Van Haarlem as well.

"Baseball's been a family experience for me," Caron says. "Darryl and Jeff take a lot of the load off Pat and myself. This really works because of Pat, Darryl and Jeff. I've been lucky."

www.tincaps.ca

London West Tincaps Minor Rookie team: Back row (left to right): Darryl Hayton, Bob Caron, Blake Patterson, Sawyer Dodge, Edward Brown, Leo Kim, Greg Matthison. Front row: Jack Stafford, Lincoln Spear, Jake Smith, Jacob Hnatyk, Declan Hickey, Jack Matthison, Kingsly Weber, Matthew Lu, Wyatt Hegler

Right place, right time on the pitch

Contributions by Morgan MacLachlan and photo by Sarah Hines

Anticipation is key on the soccer pitch. Just ask the NorWest U10 Girls soccer team (also known as the 'Growling Gators'). This NorWest team, which plays in Tier 2 in the Elgin Middlesex District Soccer League (EMDSL), works hard in practices and games on anticipating what might happen next on the field.

"It's all about helping them so they can be in the right place and prepared to act at the right time," says Morgan MacLachlan, one of the team's coaches. "So, we're trying to work on more positional soccer and how to be effective off the ball. We're also working to keep possession of the ball and work it around the field more effectively."

The NorWest U10 Girls Tier 2 soccer team: Top row (left to right): Marin Lawrence, Charlotte Hines, Carl Bonello, Athanasia Maglaris, Tiana Ivanisevic, Anjana Goela, Morgan MacLachlan, Maeve Duerden. Bottom row (left to right): Sloane Shaddick, Gabriell MacLachlan, Alexis Bonello. Missing: Alexandra Coombs

This is the first season of competitive soccer for the girls on NorWest's U10 team, which plays their games at the North London Athletic Fields. But they've really risen to the occasion, their coach says. In fact, after losing their first game, they tied a match before winning four games in a row to really get rolling.

"We're hoping to keep the strong play going," says MacLachlan, who, along with Carl Bonello, has coached this group of girls for the past three years, starting when they were U7 Rec Girls at NorWest. Maclachlan herself has played the game for 36 years, and she continues to play in the women's league for the East London Soccer Club.

Besides their talent on the field, what's the biggest strength for the NorWest U10 Girls team? The 'Growling Gators' have a fantastic team dynamic, as they've really come together as a team in their years playing together.

"The girls all really get along well, and the desire to succeed is consistent and very evident in every player," says MacLachlan. "These girls are great all-around athletes who know how to finish by putting the ball in the net."

www.norwestsoccer.com

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A reunion on the diamond

Contributions by Chris Chambers and Roop Chanderdat
Photos submitted by Chris Chambers and Matt Hiscox

Seven years. That's how long it was between London Majors games for Chris Chambers, who returned for a weekend in June to suit up for his old team. And it was an emotional homecoming for the Redwood City, California native, who grew a lot – both as a player and person – during his time with the Majors from 2009 to 2012.

"It's crazy how taking a chance to play baseball in London, Ontario shaped my whole life," said Chambers, who originally joined the Majors in 2009 after a year away from baseball following his career at Oklahoma Baptist College. "I thought I was done for good until Roop [Chanderdat] called. Little did I know, my whole life would change for the better."

Chanderdat, the long-time Majors' manager, recruited Chambers in part thanks to pitcher Josh Palmer, who had attended college with Chambers. The California native also lived next to Mason Reilly, another former Major. Chambers joined the team as a 24-year-old in 2009. While in London, he met his future wife, met some of his best friends, and succeeded on the diamond.

In 2011, Chambers hit .292 with six home runs and 27 RBIs in 35 games. In 2012, a year in which he also pitched 15 1/3 innings, the left-handed hitter batted .343 with 24 hits and 13 runs scored in just 18 games.

But it wasn't always smooth sailing – especially during his early days. Chambers recalls vividly an incident in 2010 that had a profound impact on him. Playing in Toronto, he hit a lazy fly ball to right field and didn't run out of the batter's box. When the ball was caught, he threw his helmet. Roop, he says, was not having it.

"He gave me a stern talking to in front of everyone in the dugout," recalls Chambers. "He made an example out of me. He then made me go sit in the bullpen. He was letting the team know how

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Celebrating improvements key for club

Contributions by Anthony Strangio

They're a team in the truest sense of the word. Despite the fact that the majority of team members on the Oakridge Fire U9 Boys soccer squad hadn't played together prior to this season, they quickly developed an overall sense of comradery, and as a result play as a unit, all working towards the same goals.

"The kids genuinely enjoy each other's company, and it shows on the field with their teamwork, effort, and willingness to help each other," says Anthony Strangio, the Oakridge Fire U9's head coach.

The Fire is comprised of 24 players who play in both the Tier 1 and Tier 2 U9 (2010) division in the Elgin Middlesex District Soccer League (EMDSL). The team's home organization is the Oakridge Soccer Club, and they're based out of Hazelden Field. Their coach says the team, which is sponsored by Dominic's Auto Service, has been focused on grassroots skills development all year.

"We continue to work on ball control, positioning, effective passing, and spatial awareness," says Strangio, who is in his fifth year coaching soccer. "Our coaching group, which also includes Ian Cunningham and my brother, David Strangio, continues to target areas that need improvement. Overall, our goal is for the kids to have fun and learn the game at each and every match and practice."

The Oakridge Fire U9's have been taught and encouraged to celebrate the 'little' accomplishments. That may mean a good pass, a good strike on net, or a great save. It may be different for each player, but the important thing is to celebrate improvement and success.

The team has registered for two festivals this summer and is looking to fare well at both, says Strangio, who also helps coach his other two boys' teams, an U8 and U5 squad. Growing up, the coach played competitive and high school soccer into his teenage years. Now he's focused on developing the skills of the next generation – including the players on the Oakridge Fire U9 squad.

"At every session we have, our players have the opportunity to both celebrate accomplishments and work on areas in need of improvement," Strangio says. "As our team members continue to get comfortable with each other, as well as learn each other's strengths and weaknesses, I look forward to seeing them rise to challenge other strong teams that I know we'll face this season."

Oakridge Fire U9 Boys soccer team: Back row (left to right): Anthony Strangio, Ian Cunningham. Middle row: Oliver Haraszthy, Hesham Alhaj Ali, Cohen Chamberlain, Xander Cunningham, Ahmed Tassi, Finley Butler, Ryan Beaulieu, Iyad Osman, Lucas Enwright, Owen Hartung, Carter Thorne. Front row: Nash Kelly, Jack Mellors, Jack McMillan, Joseph Strangio, Jordan Saadat, Grayson Sooy, Aidan Brennan, Bronson Hunt, Nicholas Keith, Caleb Dunford,Paul Ryan, Drew Pringle. Missing from photo: David Strangio (coach) and Dominic Teixeira.

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important it is to always play hard. He said it's the same way you live life: you play/live right so you have no excuses. It stuck with me then and until now."

Chanderdat, Chambers says, was a sort of father figure during his time in London. Their relationship was a good one, and they've kept in touch ever since Chambers hung up the spikes after the 2012 season when he took over operations of his family's appliance store. It was a tough decision, as London had become his second home. Kelsey moved to California and the couple got married soon after (and now have two kids).

Chris Chambers returned to the London Majors for a weekend in June, seven years after he last suited up for the team.

Chris Chambers is greeted by his family (wife Kelsey and kids Leanna and Colten) after his first Majors game since 2012.

Fast forward to June 2019. Chanderdat had a three-game weekend on deck and was short a player. With one of the team's import players unable to get a VISA in time, the Majors had an open spot. Chanderdat phoned Chambers. This time, it was an easy decision.

"I came to London with my whole family, and we had the best weekend," Chambers said. It was even more fun than I expected."

He played in all three games, including a 6-3 win at Labatt Park against the Guelph Royals on Friday, June 7. On the Sunday in Toronto, Chambers went 2-for-4 with an RBI single, scoring Kyle Gormandy to put the Majors ahead 4-2 in the sixth inning. They went on to win 6-5, their second win in three weekend contests.

"Coming back seven years later really opened my eyes to what Roop and the Majors bring to everyone," said Chambers. "To see, from a new perspective, the grind year in and year out to help the young men and support the city was mind-boggling. It's something I never seemed to notice as a 24-year-old kid who just showed up and played.

"I can't thank the Majors and Roop enough for allowing me to be part of such a great tradition in the city."

www.londonmajors.com

What is PTM?

By Megan Turres

NorWest Optimist Soccer has adopted Ontario Soccer's Preferred Training Model (PTM) for our U7 through U12 players as the next step in Long-Term Player Development. PTM allows our players to participate in a progressive training program while mentoring grassroots coaches. Our practice fields are pre-set with Activity and Game stations, monitored by coaches and supervised by CSA-certified club staff. Kids rotate through Activity & Game stations, allowing the players to learn from different coaches while also allowing coaches to develop using Ontario Soccer-designed programming – while preserving community soccer.

Top 10 Perks of PTM:

1. More touches on the ball
2. More shots on goal
3. More 1v1 attacking
4. More 1v1 defending
5. Ball is in play longer
6. Easier to organize and coach
7. Spatially, Physically & Cognitively stage appropriate
8. Experience of both Tactical and Technical situations
9. Constant transition from attacking to defending situations
10. IT'S FUN!

NorWest Soccer PTM:

Our practices consist of Activities and Small-sided Games. Activities focus on the technical aspect of training, while Small-sided Games focus on tactical development. We use 4v4 and 5v5 Small-sided Games because players get more touches on the ball, get to experience more 1v1 situations, and get to score more goals.

Why PTM is important:

The Preferred Training Model breaks down the basics of soccer using kid-friendly activities. As noted by Ontario Soccer 'Youth prefer to be stimulated instead of being instructed.' So, that's what we're doing! Children are not miniature adults. PTM cuts out laps, lectures, and lineups and lets them learn through play. Our main goal is for players to have fun and enjoy community soccer.

www.norwestsoccer.com

At Norwest Soccer, players improve their skills using the Preferred Training Method (PTM). It's another way to achieve the organization's goal: for all players to have fun while enjoying community soccer.

Empowering female players and coaches

Contributions by Meaghan Vader, St. Thomas Soccer Club

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Only 10 organizations were chosen, by Ontario Soccer, to pilot the 'Same Game' project, which helps clubs create more opportunities for female leaders. One of those organizations was the St. Thomas Soccer Club (STSC), which is excitedly embarking on piloting a female coaching mentorship and leadership group.

Said Johnny Misley, Ontario Soccer's CEO: "Ontario Soccer is committed to developing our female leaders within the sport ... Same Game will enable these select organizations to begin building gender equality into the fabric of their community and carry that trend on to the field."

The Same Game project is run in partnership with the Canadian Association for the Advancement of Women and Sport and Physical Activity (CAAWS). The model provides six steps to help community clubs embed gender equality into their organizations and make tangible improvements in the retention and promotion of girls and women within and through sport.

Says the St. Thomas Soccer Club: "We want to empower and support our female players and coaches to be strong – both on the field and in the community."

Meanwhile at the STSC, the club has expanded to three teams in the London & Area Women's Soccer League (LAWSL), in

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Health, focus key for top soccer club

Submitted by FC LONDON

With teams from U8 through to semi-pro playing in the top leagues in Ontario, the London TFC Academy and FC LONDON clubs are well into their 2019 season. And with a variation in the playoff format for League1 this year, the pressure is on to stay at the top of the table for the balance of the year.

League1 Ontario is now owned by CPL (the Canadian Premier League), the long-awaited nationwide professional league which kicked off its inaugural season with a game in Hamilton this spring. As part of the new ownership, CPL is being very respectful of the college/university season and, as such, has compressed the league and playoff format to be completed by early September in sync with post secondary seasons. This year's playoff format will see the top eight teams on the men's side and the top six from women's leagues compete for the honour of being crowned as league champions. On the men's side, the winning team will join the Nutrilite Championship which is the preliminary round to a berth against MLS and international teams in the CONCACAF Champions League.

"The tighter season allows us to stay focused on a clear end goal," says FC LONDON Head Coach Michael Marcoccia. "On the flip side, it means that keeping the team healthy is key to a successful postseason. Our 'periodization' model is key in maintaining a level of fitness throughout the season."

Youth teams competing under the London TFC Academy banner in both OPDL (the highest development league for U13 an U14 boys and girls) and in OASL (Ontario's top academy league) are practicing during the week and playing most weekends. Both OPDL and OASL are components of Ontario Soccer's player pathway, and youth teams attend League1 games to get exposure to the highest calibre soccer in the area. With the Women's World cup this year, there are lots of motivating teams, players and action on television and social media to keep enthusiasm high for raising the bar.

Through its affiliation with MLS 2017 Champions Toronto FC, the club continues to bring top-level coaching to the region. Affiliate clubs such as Strathroy Football Club, St. Thomas Soccer Club, and Lambeth Soccer Club all benefit from an increased level of professional coaching provided by Toronto FC coaches. For more information about the season, the rosters, schedule and tickets, visit:

www.fclondon.ca

Photo by Martin Bazyl
Chelsea Zavitz continues to anchor the FC LONDON women's team

Photo by Michael Fayehun
Anthony Sokalski leads the FC LONDON men's team this season

addition to offering its popular in-house women's recreational league. At the youth level, girls programs are offered in both recreational and competitive soccer. This season, the club boasts 25 youth recreational girls teams and 12 competitive female squads.

The annual Girls Soccerfest tournament takes place July 27-28. What's it about? Besides fantastic soccer action, it provides an opportunity to celebrate, inspire and encourage female soccer players to continue being involved in the sport for a lifetime!

www.stthomassoccer.com

The St. Thomas Soccer Club was chosen as one of 10 organizations to pilot the 'Same Game' project, which aims to empower women and girls on the pitch (as players) and on the sidelines (as coaches).

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BMO Academy Training - Skills Training for Ages 2-12

Women's Rec Soccer League for Ages 20+
Women's Competitive Soccer League for Ages 18+
Women's Premier Soccer League Open Age

Men's Rec Soccer League
Men's Competitive Soccer League
Men's Premier Soccer League

SW Alumni Adult Co-Ed Rec League
SW Alumni Adult Co-Ed Competitive League
SW Alumni Adult Co-Ed Premier League

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Preparation: Not your typical 'warm-up'

Submitted by RPG Training Systems

Preparation takes on many forms. Each aspect of proper preparation has a unique component that is designed to get you mentally and physically prepared for practice or competition. The goal is to approach preparation in sport (a pivotal component to athletic success) by tackling the four pillars of performance: mindset, nutrition, movement, and recovery.

In the world of optimized performance, taking time to focus on these four categories will drastically improve cognitive function, skill acquisition, muscular function, strength, speed and power – also known as your ability to 'win.' Once you have established a routine that encompass these four pillars, the preparation becomes quite easy.

Here are some strategies for each of the pillars that we use or recommend with our athletes at RPG Training Systems...

- **Mental/Mindset:** The phrase 'Starting with Why,' developed by Simon Sinek, is definitely the best place to start. But in our experience, that is often challenging to uncover in athletes – both young and old. Instead, start with a goal, aim or objective. This will allow you to plan, strategize and execute in a direction. Once you are moving, then the 'Why' may become more clear. Remember, it is ultimately about the person you become, not the object you seek, that makes the journey worthwhile. Focus on the process to get you to your goal, and focus on your goal to get you through the process.
- **Nutrition:** Much like anything, nutrition is highly individual. General recommendations for meals, diet plans and portion sizes are all highly-dependant on the individual athlete and the situation – as well as a host of other variables. But as a general guideline, when it comes time to prepare for practice or competition, you should be consuming a 2:1 ratio of carbohydrates to protein. People following a keto-based diet might read this and recommend no carbs and more fats. For that reason, it is best to listen to your body. No one thing is going to be the "right" answer for everyone, every time. Ultimately if you are able to narrow your pre-workout meal or snack (or any meal, for that matter) to something that gives you ample amounts of fuel and clarity, without spiking your blood sugar, you are in a good place!
- **Movement:** Much like nutrition, each individual moves differently. One athlete may feel a stretch, while their teammate right beside them, in the same position, may feel nothing – or worse, pain. For this reason, team-based movement and skill preparation often look very similar from age to age and sport to sport. It is recommended that, as a team, you develop a routine that progressively increases heart rate, circulation, mental clarity and neural drive, and moves from general to specific skills. This team-based routine is just as much about getting athletes moving as it is about getting the team to gel. On an individual scale, that same movement routine will, if done properly, challenge each athlete's capacity within the same movement skills. This is ultimately the goal of the preparation routine: a group of individuals, working on tuning their bodies for performance while working together as a collective group. When you see that 'poetry in motion,' it is truly effortless, and athletes are able to achieve a 'flow' state that carries them through the day.
- **Recovery:** Just because the practice, workout or competition is over, it doesn't mean that the 'preparation' is over. Far from it. Preparation, in its truest sense, is 'beginning with the end in mind.' Recovery (or regeneration or restoration) is an essential component to performance gains. Spending time at the end of practice reviewing the 'game plan,' or rolling out after a heavy lift, or fueling your tired muscles after a long tournament, are all steps necessary to ensure that you are able to compete the next day. Recovery also encompasses rest. Ample sleep, especially for growing athletes, is a must. Setting some guidelines or boundaries around bedtime, computer or screen time can be challenging, but it will ultimately result in greater muscular repair, motor learning and mental clarity.

To find out more about our training and holistic approach to athlete development, check us out at www.rpgtrainingsystems.com, London's newest High-Performance Training company!

www.rpgtrainingsystems.com

RPG Training Systems, 'London's newest High-Performance Training company,' offers a holistic approach to athlete training and development.

Junior racing at its best

Contributions by Hannah Whitworth

The Junior Racing League (JRL) at Delaware Speedway provides youth aged 8 to 17 the opportunity to learn all about stock car racing and compete in a safe and encouraging environment.

It was founded in 1997, and it's still going strong. The Delaware Junior Racing League, sponsored by Krown Body Maintenance, is a program that teaches young drivers (8 to 17 years old) 'the ins and outs' of stock car racing in a safe and encouraging environment where growth and personal development are the keys.

The Junior Racing League (JRL), which runs throughout the summer on Wednesday nights, is divided into two divisions – the Junior Division (8-12 years old) and the Senior Division (13-17 years old). The cars, which are equipped the same as their full-sized counterparts, reach speeds between 40-50 km/h on Delaware Speedway's inside road course. Instead of competing for money, racers compete for year-end trophies, which are handed out at the end of the summer (August 31), as junior racers and their families get together to celebrate the season.

This year, the JRL has 12 cars competing in 12 different events, with the drivers ranging in age from 7 to 15. The season began May 1 with an open practice, and races have been staged most Wednesday nights since. Spectator gates open at 6pm and racing starts at 6:30pm. Championship night takes place August 14.

While racing, the JRL drivers learn valuable life skills, including focus, communication, conflict management, stress management, and the ability to learn from mistakes. Meanwhile, thanks to a family-like atmosphere, the JRL creates lasting friendships for drivers – and their families.

What happens to graduates of the JRL program? Often, they can be seen in action every Friday night at Delaware Speedway. Others find themselves competing in the APC Series. In other words, the future is bright for JRL racers!

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www.lvcfire.com/vcep

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Details and info: ***www.lvcfire.com/lvcamp***

FCVC athletes reach the Provincial stage

Submitted by FCVC

The Forest City Volleyball Club (FCVC) has wrapped up its 27th season of youth volleyball, and we would like to wish all athletes a safe and fun-filled summer! See you on the courts in September!

Summer High Performance

Ben Kerkhoff is representing Canada at the FIVB U21 Beach World Championship in Thailand this summer! He has also signed with McMaster University to compete at the varsity level starting next fall. Thank you, Ben, for being such an incredible role model for the next generation of FCVC athletes. Your never-quit work ethic, passion, and sportsmanship have earned you this success!

Rachel Gray has been selected for the Team Ontario Black roster. This program is meant to prepare athletes for the next level by placing them in an environment similar to that of the National Team. This team trains at the Athlete Institute in Orangeville from July 7-17 and then competes in the U.S. High Performance tournament in Fort Lauderdale July 17-23. Congratulations Rachel!

Brodan Murphy, Jake Thompson, Brendan Mills, Zac Taylor, Aliah Admans, Emily Pilarski, Jasmine Cooper, Sydney Scatcherd and Ava Ebert each received invitations to the OVA High Performance Camp and Team Ontario Red tryouts in North Bay July 6-13. Successful athletes compete in the Canada Cup in Halifax July 17-21. Congratulations and good luck to these very talented athletes! In addition, Aliah Admans received recognition from Volleyball Canada as a 16U All-Star at Nationals in Regina, SK. We are FCVC proud of you, Aliah!

Andrew Kerkhoff was selected for the Team Ontario White program, which bridges the gap between the Team Ontario Regional Program and the Team Ontario Red. Andrew will participate in a six-day camp from July 7-13 at Nipissing University in North Bay. Congratulations!

Ben Kerkhoff is representing Canada at the FIVB U21 Beach World Championship

Emerson McAuley, Ella Booth, Jason Aswald, Gabriel Miles and Juan-Mateo Moreno have each been selected for the OVA 14U Team Ontario Regional Program! This program allows athletes from across the province to experience a high-performance style of training and instruction through an overnight summer training camp. Congratulations to each of you! We are FCVC proud!

Rachel Gray | Broden Murphy | Jake Thompson | Brendan Mills | Aliah Admans | Emily Pilarski | Jasmine Cooper | Sydney Scatcherd

Ava Ebert | Andrew Kerkhoff | Zac Taylor | Emerson McAuley | Ella Booth | Jason Aswald | Gabriel Miles | Juan-Mateo Moreno

Dates: June 3, 10, 17, July 8, 22, 29, and August 12, 19, 26.
Times: 6:00-7:00 PM for setters and 7:00 - 8:00 PM for touches
Location: Fanshawe College
Cost: $5 per hour long session or $40 for all nine sessions

Skill development and game play for club level players aged 14 to 18 who want to focus on the details of their game.

Dates: July 15 - 18, 2019
Location: Fanshawe College
Cost: $340

Participants will work on improving individual setter skills and developing advanced setting skills.

Dates: July 19, 2019
Location: Fanshawe College
Cost: $85.00

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Beach Volleyball Action

FCVC 14U Boys Jacob and Blake win Gold medals at the Scorpions Beach Tournament in Grand Bend. Amazing results for the boys' first ever beach tournament!

FCVC 12U Girls Kate and Evy win Gold medals in the Scorpions 12U Beach Tournament in Grand Bend. Congratulations girls!

At the OVA Beach Tour, Ally & Addy won gold medals in 13U Premier. Congrats!

OVA Beach Tour in Port Stanley. Claire and Jess win 13U Premier Silver medals! Go FC!

OVA Beach Tour in Port Stanley. Ava and Helena win 15U Gold medals! Congrats!

OVA Beach Tour in Port Stanley. Aidan/Andrew and Zac/Kyle win Gold and Silver medals, respectively, in the 15U finals! In London, Abby/Ella and Lorelai/Maya win Gold and Silver medals, respectively, in the 14U finals! We are FCVC proud!

Natalie & Sonia won gold in 13U Championship. Go FC!

Congrats! Ella and Abby won Silver medals in 14U Premier division in Port Stanley! Way to go!

Nearly 500 attendees came out to the annual year-end FCVC banquet

forestcityvolleyball.com | facebook: FCVCLondon | twitter: @go_fcvc | instagram: forestcityvolleyball

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Stronger than ever

Submitted by the London Aquatic Club

The London Aquatic Club continues to grow and thrive, centred on delivering quality programming to almost 300 competitive swimmers (ranging in age from 6-18), from 'learn-to-swim' right up to international-caliber athletes. The Club is directed by a motivated, experienced, enthusiastic and fully qualified staff of over 20 full- and part-time coaches and is supported by an army of volunteer parents who help to keep London at the forefront of some of the best competition delivery in Ontario.

For more than 70 years, the LAC has delivered on the following mission statement: "Providing competitive swimming opportunities for all to be the very best they can be, in a positive, caring and safe environment."

www.londonaquaticclub.ca

LONDON AQUATIC CLUB

Some of LAC's development squads (swimmers aged 6 to 9)

Some of LAC's age group teams (swimmers aged 10 to 13)

Some of LAC's senior squads (swimmers aged 14 and up)

The London Aquatic Club coaching staff

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Something for all divers!

Submitted by Forest City Diving Club

The sport of diving has grown in popularity in recent years. The thrill of the height, and the excitement of flying in the air has brought kids together – locally and nationally. The Forest City Diving Club (FCDC) has been ranked one of the top diving clubs in Ontario. This year, summer Senior Nationals was a big success for four of our athletes, each of whom placed top 12 in the country. Katelyn Fung finished 4th on 1M, 10th on 3M, and 12th on Platform, while Joshua Inglis placed 4th on 1M and 6th on 3M, and Faith Zacharias placed 7th on 1M.

Continuing with the club's ongoing success and its dedication to the sport, FCDC in July is sending four athletes to the Jr. Elite Nationals in Montreal, Que (Joshua Inglis, Camryn Hughes, Nathan Marshall, and Katelyn Fung), as well as four athletes to the Jr. Development Nationals in Regina, SK (Nigel Chambers, Abbigail Haygarth, Alexa Fung, and Daria Chambers). Each of these athletes has worked hard and is passionate about their sport as they look to take it to the next level. FCDC is very proud of their achievements and the support of their coaches.

Summer Camp is in full swing. We have two energized coaches who provide two sessions daily of dryland and diving instructions to kids aged 6 and up. In between pool time, kids are engaged in fun activities that keep them staying active the whole day. And don't forget about Pizza Friday! Sessions run from July 8 to August 23. Sign up today!

Does your child want to pursue diving competitively? FCDC is always looking for athletes who have the passion and the desire to progress their diving to the next level. Kids compete at provincial and national levels. Contact us to have your child assessed today! Not interested in the hype of competing and just want to learn how to dive recreationally? We have a program for you as well! Our 'Learn to Dive' program runs from September to June for all ages – including adults. Registration starts in August. Don't delay, register today.

www.forestcitydiving.com

FCDC at Canada Games Aquatic Centre: Daria Chambers, Alexa Fung, Nigel Chambers, Abbigail Haygarth, Nathan Marshall, Camryn Hughes, and Coaches Wing Hu and Luda Zakharenko.

At the National Training Centre, the Toronto Pan Am Sports Centre: Joshua Inglis, Katelyn Fung and coach Gilles Emptoz-Lacote

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Million Dollar Shootout

How would you like a chance to win a million dollars while supporting a great cause? Local golf courses and facilities in the community will hold qualifiers in the months leading up to the Canada Life Championship for the Million Dollar Shootout. Qualifiers are set to take place during men's and ladies nights, club championships and more. The person that hits a shot closest to the pin on a designated hole qualifies for the Million Dollar Shootout Finals, to take place Saturday of the Canada Life Championship.

Local area qualifiers will raise money for Child-Can, the official charity of the Canada Life Championship.

Childcan
Supporting Children and Families through Childhood Cancer

ChildCan is the official charity of the Canada Life Championship

Qualifying sites

June 19-Hermitage Club/Green Hills-TBA
June 21-Highland Best Ball/Highland Country Club-12-6 P.M.
June 22-St. Mary's Golf Club-9 A.M.
July 9-Highland Ladies Guest Day/Highland Country Club-1-6 P.M.
July 10-Highland Men's League/Highland Country Club-10-6 P.M.
July 18-The Spark/Highland Country Club-1-6 P.M.
August 6-9-Bob Martin's Driving Range-8:30-9:30 P.M.
August 16-Highland Men's Guest Day/Highland Country Club-9-2P.M.
September 10-Canada Life Pro-Am/Highland Country Club-TBA

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Mackenzie Tour Players Impress at RBC Canadian Open

Once again proving that Mackenzie Tour players can compete at any level, Canada Life Open champion Jake Knapp and Bayview Place DC Bank Open presented by Times Colonist champ Paul Barjon both challenged their games against those on the PGA TOUR at the RBC Canadian Open in Hamilton, Ont from June 6-9. Knapp managed to make the cut at the event, making an eagle and a birdie on holes 16 and 17 on Friday to qualify for the weekend on the number, eventually finishing in 70th place. Meanwhile, Barjon, who won the Canada Life Championship in 2016, took his momentum from his win in Victoria and placed T20, tieing household names such as Dustin Johnson and Justin Thomas. Both Knapp and Barjon hope to join the 24 Mackenzie Tour alumni currently playing on the PGA TOUR. To date, seven Mackenzie Tour alumni have won on the game's greatest stage. See Barjon and Knapp this year in London at the Canada Life Championship

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National award for junior program

Submitted by London Junior Golf Development Centre

On Sunday May 26, 2019, Golf Canada hosted a unique celebration in the London area at FireRock Golf Club. There, Golf Canada presented the London Junior Golf Development Centre with one of its most prestigious awards, the 2018 Future Links Facility of the Year.

Led by PGA Professional Brian Gallant and PGA Community Coaches, FireRock Golf Club provided the perfect venue for the celebration. Over 40 juniors participated in Golf Canada's Junior Skills Challenge, which had the juniors participate in three skills – driving, chipping and putting – and receiving points for the result of the shot. Following the skills challenge, the juniors were joined by family members for a BBQ and awards presentation.

"This is one of the most important days of my golf career," said PGA Professional Brian Gallant. "This celebration was only possible thanks to the various coaches that have supported our program over the year – and most importantly, the juniors and families that make this possible. My family has been instrumental in my success, as I was often coaching in the evenings and weekends. Without my family, this award would not have happened."

The London Junior Golf Development Centre is only the sixth Canadian golf program to receive the Future Links Facility of the year Award since the inaugural award in 2013.

To become part of this best in-class golf program and community, visit www.golfbetter.ca

www.londonjuniorgolf.com

As part of the celebration to receive the 2018 Future Links Facility of the Year award, youngsters from the London Junior Golf Development Centre participated in Golf Canada's Junior Skills Challenge

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A hole-in-one – and a new car!

Contributions by Lexus of London

For the first time in the event's 24-year history, a participant won a car with a hole-in-one at the Bluewater Health Foundation's 'Golf Fore Health' charity tournament in June, as Sarnia native Jamie Carson did the honours on the 165-yard seventh hole at the Sarnia Golf and Curling Club. In doing so, he won the big prize – $50,000 to be put towards a vehicle from Lexus of London, a tournament sponsor.

"It was a good shot, but I never thought it would go in," said Carson, of Libro Credit Union, who has been participating in the event for many years. "Even when the spotters jumped, I didn't know what to expect. As we walked up and saw that there wasn't a ball on the green, I was in total shock."

Jamie Carson (second from left) notched a hole-in-one at Bluewater Health Foundation's annual 'Golf Fore Health' tournament in June, earning him a $50,000 prize to be put towards the purchase of a vehicle at Lexus of London.

In addition to winning a Lexus, Carson also took home a golf package – a four-day, three-night golf vacation at French Lick Resort in Indiana. Though understandably excited about his own fortunes, Carson was quick to praise the event, which raised more than $25,000 for new equipment at Bluewater Health.

"Overall, it was a great day for a great organization. I can't thank Bluewater Health enough with all they do for our community, and also a thank you to Lexus of London for supporting such a worthy organization."

Allan Calvert of Lexus of London, a proud sponsor of the event, got word of the ace over the phone as he was participating in the tournament.

"I was so thrilled to hear the news of the hole-in-one and I couldn't be happier for Jamie," said Calvert, Sales Manager at Lexus of London. "It's not every day that we get to give away a car, and Lexus of London is proud to be able to do so, especially as we support Bluewater Health."

Talented juniors hit the links

Submitted by Midwestern Optimist Junior Golf Committee

The Optimist International Organization has been involved in promoting Junior Golf since 1978. Optimist members from London have been involved since day one, providing opportunities for boys and girls ages 10 to 18 to participate in Optimist tournaments held in a positive environment.

The London Albert Hill Optimist Junior Golf Championships this year take place at Thames Valley Golf Course on July 17, and the tournament will be a qualifier for the Midwestern Optimist District Championships, to be held at the St. Marys Golf & Country Club on August 6. This District tournament qualifies a number of junior golfers for a spot in the prestigious 2020 Optimist International Golf Championships in Florida. Over the years, many dozens of juniors have had the chance to participate in what, for many, is a once-in-a-lifetime experience. That tournament typically hosts 650 juniors from 40 countries.

Corey Conners is a former two-time qualifier for the Optimist International Golf Championships. Recently, the 27-year-old earned his first win on the PGA Tour.

Canadian golfers recently in the news include Corey Conners from Listowel and Brooke Henderson from Smiths Falls, Ontario. Corey, who qualified twice for the Optimist International, achieved his first win on the PGA Tour. Brooke, also a former qualifier for the Optimist International, recently became the winningest female Canadian golfer with nine wins at the young age of 21.

Something new this year is that the Junior Tyson Tour tournament on July 22 at the Highland Golf & Country Club will also serve as a qualifier for the Midwestern Championships. Other Optimist tournaments and information can be found online at www.cojg.com.

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2019 Lexus Golf Classic

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in support of prostate cancer research

GET FIT is a hit!

By SportsXpress Team

How successful has GET FIT Aerobics been at the Boys & Girls Club and the Horton Street Seniors' Centre? Well, it's been running for more than 30 years! The program is definitely doing something right, and it continues to be a favourite among members.

What does it look like today? For starters, it's run by fitness coordinator Emily Bright, who has been leading workouts at the Centre for the last three years. She brings a lot of energy to the classes, which offer a good combination of strength and conditioning, balance, fitness and aerobics. Music also helps, and participants quickly become energized themselves.

GET FIT Aerobics is a group exercise, and it builds a strong sense of community for the participants in the class. In addition, the group dynamic takes the 'guesswork' out of fitness that inevitably arises when exercising on one's own. With the instructor leading the class, participants can simply follow and guarantee themselves a good workout.

The most popular activity at the Horton Street Seniors' Centre, GET FIT runs four times per week – each workout consisting of a 45-minute aerobic and strengthening group exercise class. In other words, GET FIT is a hit!

What is the Horton Street Seniors' Centre (HSSC)? It operates out of the Boys & Girls (BGC) of London and serves adults aged 55 years and up, offering fun and engaging activities and events for Londoners. Popular new social groups include yoga, zumba, tap dancing, music, drama, darts and chair hockey, among others.

The Centre has around 300 members (with an 'extended family' of more than 1,400 members). The facility is open during weekdays, and activities are scheduled between 7am and 3pm. Perhaps the best part about the HSSC? It's affordable. Membership is based on income (and starts as low as $75 per year). A parking pass costs $40 per calendar year. Meanwhile, a visitor's fee is $3 per day (including parking), which allows access to activity programs and afternoon open swim. And an activity pass is $35 per year, which allows access to one regular program per week (pool programs and fitness room not included).

At the Horton Street Seniors' Centre (within the Boys & Girls Club), the GET FIT aerobics class is a popular activity among seniors, as it combines strength and conditioning with balance exercises.

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Club to compete on world stage

By Spiro Papadatos for Family Karate Centres

The Family Karate Centres' Competition Team enjoyed a successful trip to the WKC Canadian National Championships in Gatineau, Quebec on Victoria Day Weekend. The Palais des Congrès hosted the prestigious event, which featured Canada's best martial artists competing for a spot on the National Team – and the opportunity to represent their country at the WKC World Championships this fall.

It was a highly successful trip to the WKC Canadian National Championships in Gatineau, Quebec during the May long weekend for Family Karate Centres. Five local athletes competed, and the club earned qualifications to the World Championships in November.

Family Karate Centres (FKC) sent five competitors (each of whom qualified at the Ontario Regional Championships in April). The team was led by Jake Lindsay and Nathan Parker. Lindsay swept all three of his divisions, winning gold in Boys 15-17 Classical Kata, Hard Kata and -60 kg Point Sparring. Parker also finished undefeated for the weekend, securing gold medals in both -70 kg Light Contact Continuous Fighting and -70 kg Point Fighting (Boys 15-17).

Nine-year-old Athena Papadatos won gold in Girls (10 and under) -30 kg Light Contact Continuous Fighting, silver in Point Fighting, bronze in Classical Kata, and fifth in Hard Kata, earning her a spot on Team Canada for the third consecutive year.

Nicole Keeri-Szanto and Nicole Heard both looked impressive in their Nationals debut, with the 15-year-old Keeri-Szanto qualifying for Team Canada with a fourth-place finish in -65 kg Point Sparring (Girls 15-17), and the 13-year-old Heard finishing strong as a finalist in -55 kg Point Sparring (Girls 13-14).

The 2019 edition of the WKC National Championships were the biggest and best yet, making them the most competitive Team Canada tryouts ever. Preparations for Worlds are well underway, with all of the FKC qualifiers resuming their intense training upon their return from Quebec. We look forward to cheering on our Team Canada members when they compete at the World Championships in Niagara Falls, New York in November!

www.familykarate.ca

Try karate this summer!

Submitted by Olympic Karate

School is out and children are enjoying summer holidays, time at the cottage, and some of the numerous day camps and other summer programs offered in the region.

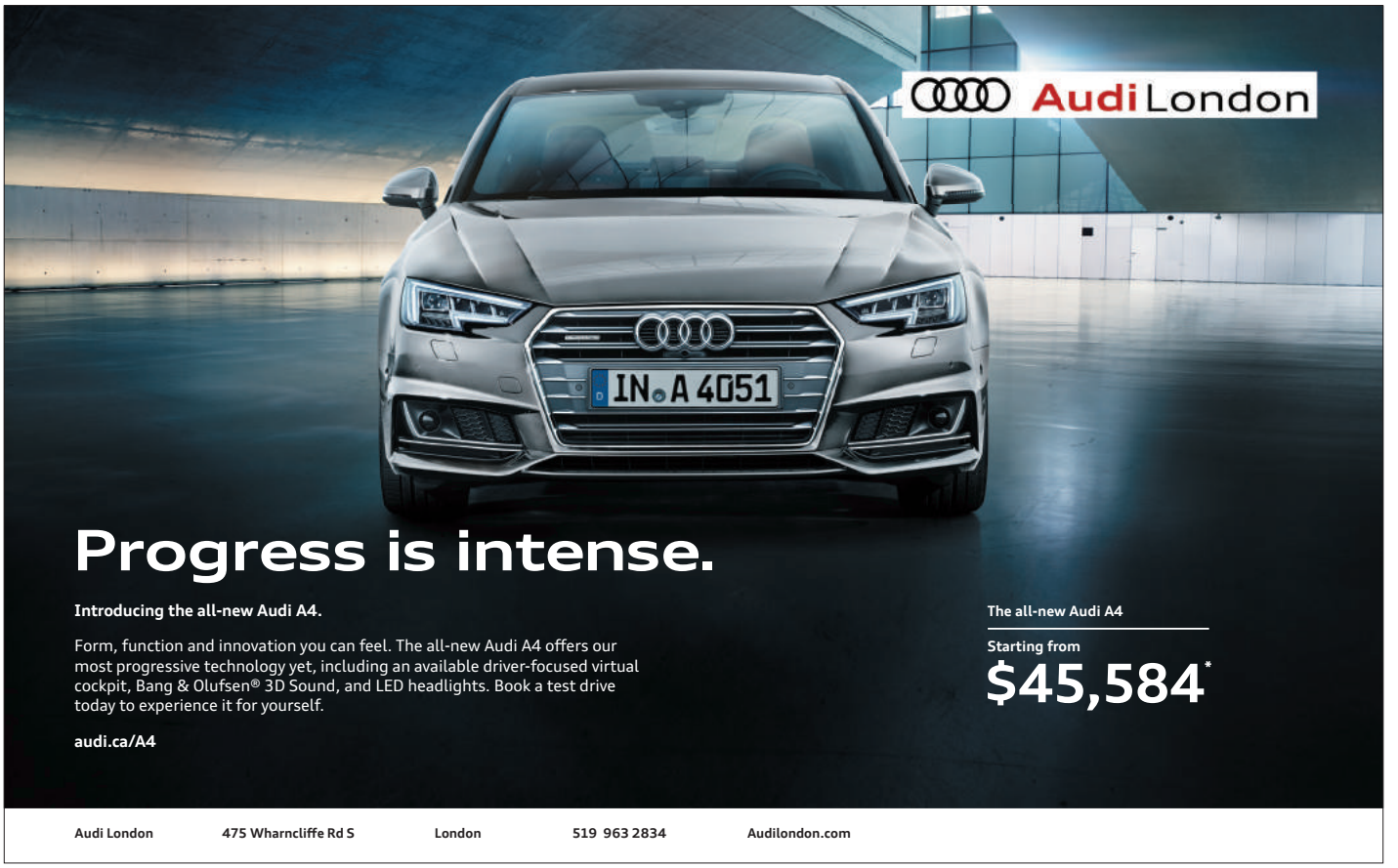
Every year at this time, a number of our students at Olympic Karate are not able to train in class because of summer commitments. This year, we are offering our 'Summer Special' Training Package to give new people a chance to try karate. The Summer Special gives you the chance to train for up to four months and get two months free. This includes your uniform and your belt promotions. Olympic Karate is the first school to offer this kind of Summer Special, and more than 15 new students had already enrolled by mid-June. But there is still room for your family (we also have a few openings in our summer day camp programs).

Instead of having kids say the dreaded words, "Mom, I'm bored," bring them in for a Free Trial Lesson to see if they like Olympic Karate classes.

Olympic Karate had a 'kick-a-thon' for the week of Saturday, June 22, and we collected non-perishable food items and diapers for the London Food Bank.

www.olympickarate.on.ca

This summer, Olympic Karate is offering a 'Summer Special' Training Package, which allows new students to train for up to four months – while getting two months free. The club is also hosting a summer day camp program.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A family feel for gymnastics club

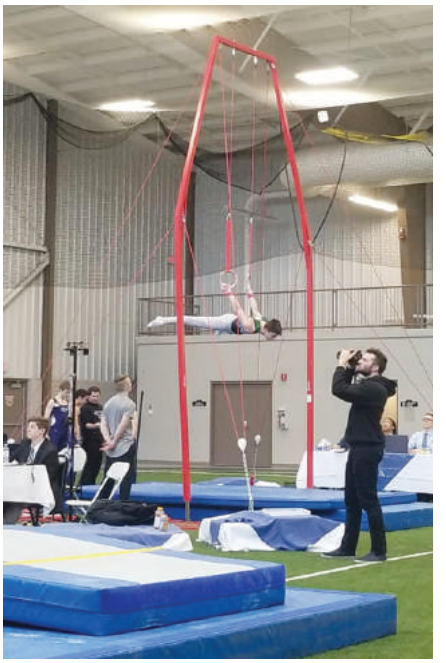
FCGC FOREST CITY GYMNASTICS

By Merritt Lymburner, Forest City Gymnastics

The competitive program at Forest City Gymnastics, locally known as Team FCGC, has had a spectacular season – both in results and in growth! With numbers booming, meet successes piling in, and community connections continuing to grow, it is no wonder that the program continues to thrive after more than four decades in the city!

After enjoying their second full season in their beautiful and expansive new facility, the team has now evolved to be the home of over 130 competitive athletes! Ranging in age from 5 to 18 years old, in both a men's and women's program, these athletes call themselves a family – and they mean it! With team-building trips, multiple in-house events and more, all of the athletes and families really demonstrate a love for the club and all of the gymnasts, regardless of level.

FCGC also hosts multiple competitions every year, including Ontario Championship meets, and those events would not be possible without the dedication of the entire FCGC 'family' pitching in. One of the reputations Forest City has earned around the gymnastics community over the years is that of running fun and well-organized events, which in turn showcases the impressive program and support system that the organization has in place. Like a well-run machine, it is clear that everyone involved loves what they do and who they do it with!



The Forest City Gymnastics Club continues to provide high-quality programming for gymnasts in London and area, offering a tight-knit community as they support and encourage all their athletes to improve, grow and develop – in gymnastics and in life.

One of the most noteworthy highlights to come out of the 2018-2019 season was the success of men's team athlete Nicholas Homsi. This past spring, Nick qualified to be part of Team Ontario and was invited to compete at the Eastern Canadian Championships! Nick got to fly out to PEI with his coach, his mother and the rest of the Team Ontario contingent, to compete against multiple other provinces. He managed to withstand the pressure and rose to the occasion, and it resulted in his season best meet! That effort earned him four podium finishes, including a Bronze medal on the Floor exercise. Nick's performances also greatly helped Team Ontario earned a Silver medal in the All-Around competition!

The longevity of Forest City Gymnastics is clearly the result of an awesome community, which is made up of dedicated coaches and staff, as well as the families of all of the athletes. Whether a child is a once-per-week recreational gymnast, or a 5-time-per-week competitive member, all are greeted with the same big smile when they come through the door and are supported as they reach for their dreams!

For more information on any of the programs at Forest City Gymnastics (including Recreational or Competitive), visit the website or contact the office at any time.

www.forestcitygym.com

Nicholas Homsi, a FCGC gymnast, earned the opportunity to compete for Team Ontario at this year's Eastern Canadian Championships, where he reached the podium four times, including winning a Bronze medal in the Floor exercise.

FOREST CITY GYMNASTICS

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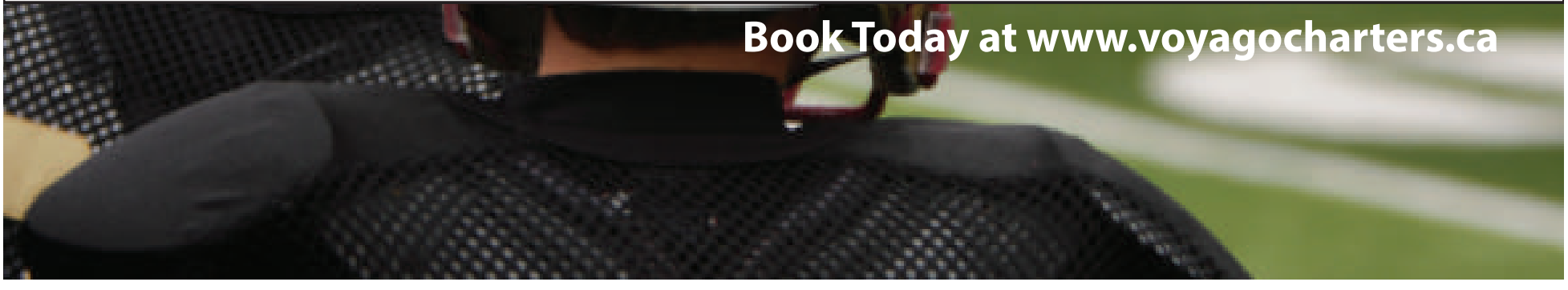

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On top at provincials

Submitted by London Gymnastics Academy

London Gymnastics Academy (LGA) rocked the house to finish the 2018-2019 competition season with a bang! Congratulations to LGA's Compulsory Level 3-5 Competitive provincial athletes for qualifying for Ontario Championships! And an outstanding job to the Level 3 athletes at this year's Ontario Championships, which were held at the Waterloo Memorial Recreation Complex on June 1-2. LGA was awarded the Top Level 3 Team in Ontario!

Congratulations also to the Level 4/5 athletes that competed at the New Tecumseth Recreation Centre in Alliston on June 7-9. We are so proud of these superstars and we commend them for their hard work and dedication! A special shout out goes to the athletes that medalled and placed in the Top 8 Overall at Championships:

- Ava Easton – 4th Overall, 1st Bars
- Ella Ferreira – 2nd Overall, 3rd Beam
- Abigail Dogar – 1st Beam
- Olivia Prince – 5th Overall, 1st Vault, 2nd Bars
- Madeline Hunter – 7th Overall, 2nd Bars
- Katelyn Whitelaw-Steele – 3rd Beam
- Brynley Brown – 2nd Overall, 1st Vault, 2nd Bars, 3rd Beam
- Olivia Webb – 8th Overall, 2nd Bars
- Sarah Welch – 1st Overall, 1st Bars, 1st Beam, 1st Floor
- Daria Chambers – 2nd Overall, 2nd Vault, 3rd Bars
- Danika Roder – 5th Overall, 3rd Beam
- Ella Crowley – 2nd Overall, 1st Bars
- Ashley Bolster – 3rd Overall, 2nd Vault, 3rd Bars
- Michela Raso – 5th Overall, 3rd Beam
- Vanessa Smith – 3rd Overall, 1st Floor

Congratulations to these athletes on all of your hard work this season! LGA ALL THE WAY!

LGA Summer Camps

The London Gymnastics Academy and London Heat Cheerleading offer fun-filled, full and half-day summer camps at our new, state-of-the-art, air-conditioned facility. Athletes have an opportunity to bounce and tumble on our trampolines, play in the foam pits, swing on the bars, and test their balance on the beam.

Our coaches are experienced, highly-trained and NCCP certified. We are offering 9 weeks of camp starting July 2 and running through August 30 for children and youth aged 4 to 15. Camps include: 1.5 to 2 hours of structured gymnastics or cheerleading (morning & afternoon), thematic activities and games, crafts, outdoor activities with water-play (weather permitting) and pizza Fridays!

Last summer, our camps were very popular. To join the fun, register online.

londongymnasticsacademy.com
londonheatcheerleading.com

The London Gymnastics Academy offers fun-filled summer camps in July and August for children and youth aged 4 to 15. Join the fun this summer!

London Gymnastics Academy athletes enjoyed great success at this year's provincial championships, winning numerous medals in each division/age group. The Level 3 Team led the way, as they were crowned top team in Ontario.

A brief history...

Submitted by The Little Gym of London

With locations in over 30 countries, The Little Gym is the world's premier experiential learning and physical development franchise for children aged four months through 12 years. For over 40 years, trained instructors have nurtured happy, confident kids through a range of programs including parent/child classes, gymnastics, karate, dance and sports skills development, plus enjoyable extras like Camps, Parents' Survival Nights and Awesome Birthday Bashes. Each week, progressively structured classes and a positive learning environment create opportunities for children to try new things and build self-confidence – all with a grin on their face that stretches from ear to ear.

The Little Gym of London successfully incorporates all the vital aspects of the child-focused organization, which was founded in 1976. The result is a great group of instructors who help children learn and develop – with the help of sports like gymnastics – as they grow to become successful and happy adults.

The Little Gym was founded by Robin Wes, an educator, musician and kinesiologist. Growing up in South Africa, he was dismayed seeing children treated as if they should be seen and not heard, and that they didn't matter until they were older. As a teacher, he was instructed to control his students by fear and force. As a gymnast, he observed children being pushed into competitive sports at a young age where the emphasis seemed to be solely on winning, which created an environment for which they weren't ready – and which took an emotional toll on these aspiring athletes.

After moving to North America and starting a family, Robin opened the first The Little Gym in 1976 in Bellevue, Washington, which is still in operation today. He infused those early classes with a positive, non-competitive spirit that characterizes us today. Forty years later, children in 400 locations worldwide (including nine in Canada, with two more opening soon) experience the Serious Fun of The Little Gym.

Curriculum is centred on teaching both physical skills of sports along with cognitive and social skills for life in a fun way. We accept kids for who they are, while challenging them to try new things to open them up to be the best they can be in the future.

The Little Gym of London, owned by Ed and Mari Hughes and managed by Erin Hagglund and an awesome team of instructors, is located in Sherwood Forest Mall at Wonderland & Gainsborough (west entrance). We would love for you to stop by, visit our website at www.tlglondoncan.com, or call us at 519-642-0660. Currently, we are in our 9-week summer session, and our school-year season starts on September 7. We hope to see you soon!

www.tlglondoncan.com

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The world stage and local training

Submitted by Power Cheer Gym

World Championships

Last issue, we reported that the silver medalist team representing Canada at the 2019 International Cheer Union Junior World Championships was comprised of athletes and coaches from the Power Cheer Gym and Bluewater Cheerleading from Sarnia. Two days after the Jr team's podium performance (and after the publication deadline), Team Canada Coed 'Premier' team also took silver at the World Championships.

The (senior) National team is comprised of athletes selected from across the entire country, and we are extremely proud to have had 10 present and recently graduated Western Mustangs on the squad of 27 athletes. The Gold medalists (Team USA) have only been beaten once in the past 10 years, yet Canada was only 4 points behind them, knocking powerhouse Chinese Taipei to Bronze. Power Cheer Gym is the home training site of both the Western Mustangs and Team Canada, and we are immensely proud of the achievements of these elite cheer athletes.

Summer Training

Summer training for all levels of cheer athletes is under way with team practices, tumbling lessons, skills and specialty camps, and 'Learn to Cheer' classes. It is never too late to join, and PCG reminds anyone who missed the spring tryouts to please contact the gym and arrange for a 'try-it' session or to sit in on a practice or class for free. We have teams covering all ages and skill levels from age 4 through 18+.

The Academy Circus

Going into our second year, our team has been busy creating beautiful aerial and acrobatic performances. We competed in three competitions in Southwestern Ontario, claiming 1st overall in the aerial category. Individual performances wowed the crowd in aerial silks, hoop, trapeze, acro, contortion and Weggsphere. The Academy also performed in many local conventions, events and shows.

The Performing team is available to be booked for your next function. Contact meaghan.coaching@gmail.com for more information. Summer training camps are still accepting students for anyone interested in learning more about circus arts.

Registration is now open for our new season. Visit www.theacademycircus.com.

www.powercheergym.com

pcgvipers @PCGVipers

Team Canada Coed - Silver medalists at the 2019 ICU World Championships

The Academy – Acro, Dance, Circus. Summer registration is now open.

The Mustang Coed Cheer team is always pushing to maintain its place as the top Canadian collegiate team

Summer training for Western All-Girl always includes hill sprints on the UC Hill

So many cheer choices

Submitted by CheerStrike

At CheerStrike, it's not all about the competition. There is so much more to youth sports than competing, placings and trophies. At CheerStrike Royals Inc., we offer a program that gives equal opportunity for all children to participate in the sport of cheer – and hopefully stay engaged in sport and a healthy lifestyle as adults.

Our goal is to develop well-rounded athletes and to provide a fulfilling experience every time an athlete is at the gym. We do this by offering a variety of programs – not just competitive cheer. At CheerStrike this fall, for instance, we will be offering recreational cheer classes for children aged 4 to 12, where your child will get all the same cheer training without the cost of competition and travel. We also offer kinder cheer and tumble classes for ages 3 to 5, where children get to have fun while building the foundational skills needed to progress in cheer and tumbling. We also love our parent and tot classes for toddlers (aged 1.5 to 3), where children can safely jump, roll, bounce and climb – all while having quality time with mom or dad.

This fall, we will continue to offer private, semi-private and group tumbling classes and clinics. Have a specific tumbling skill you'd like to master? Sign up for a private tumbling lesson and focus on the skills needed to achieve that goal. Want to develop your tumbling skills at a lower cost? Sign up for a group tumbling class that is divided by skill level, so that every athlete gets the instruction he or she needs. For more information on all of our amazing programs, visit www.cheerstrikeroyals.com or email info@cheerstrikeroyals.com.

www.cheerstrikeroyals.com

CheerStrike offers several opportunities for young athletes to participate in cheer – and not just competitively. Recreational classes and other programs provide skills training for youngsters while they have a whole lot of fun!

Dance eXtreme

Dancer Spotlight: Maggie Kelly

By Richelle Hirlehey with Maggie Kelly for Dance Extreme

Dance Extreme is grateful to our graduated dancers who are pursuing their passion for dance. Richelle Hirlehey, Assistant Artistic Director, caught up with graduate Maggie Kelly to talk about her path after Dance Extreme.

Richelle Hirlehey: Can you provide me with a brief overview of your training?

Maggie Kelly: I began dancing at age 3 with creative movement classes. I progressed to basic ballet and jazz classes, and then I began competing at age 7 at a studio called Absolute Dance in Delaware. I then transitioned to Dance Extreme and competed there for 11 years.

Maggie Kelly danced and competed with Dance Extreme for 11 years. Today, she's dancing professionally – and loving every minute of it!

During my first few years at Dance Extreme, I was also taking additional ballet classes at Swan Studio. At Dance Extreme, I trained in ballet, jazz, contemporary, improvisation, and acrobatics. I danced and competed with Dance Extreme all through my high school years, and had the opportunity to perform all over Ontario, as well as internationally in Boston and London, England.

Richelle: When did you know it was dance that you wanted to pursue professionally?

Maggie: It's hard for me to pinpoint one exact moment when I decided I wanted to pursue dance professionally. It sort of felt more like dance chose me. All I knew was that nothing else in my life could hold my attention quite like dancing, and nothing else gave me the same sense of joy, curiosity and excitement. Performing gave me a thrill that I felt I had to pursue, and with the support of my family, I thought, why not chase something that makes me so happy?

Richelle: What advice do you have for young dancers who are training with a studio currently and maybe are not yet sure about the possibility of dancing professionally?

Maggie: My first piece of advice for young dancers is: savour every minute. Dancing is a gift, and the time you spend training is precious. It's an opportunity to dig deeper into your craft, finesse your ability, and explore the capabilities of your own body. It is fascinating, and it should never be taken for granted.

My second piece of advice is: be brave. Dancing is a hard career to pursue, not only because it is unstable and competitive, but also because it is a very vulnerable way to spend your life.

And my final piece of advice, and this is a big one: learn to love ballet! Many young dancers make the hasty decision that ballet is 'boring' or 'unnecessary,' but it is the foundation for everything. It will only heighten your other styles, and learning proper alignment will protect you from injury.

Richelle: Do you have anything you wished you had done differently along your path?

Maggie: One thing I wish I had done differently was starting tap at an early age! I didn't try it out until after I moved to New York, and I regret waiting so long. It's such a good skill to have, and it trains a whole different skillset that I wish I'd learned as a younger dancer.

Richelle: What words of wisdom would you pass along to current studio dancers?

Maggie: My words of wisdom are simply to never let your ego get in the way of your own growth. There is always room to learn and improve as an artist. Be open, be willing, and work hard. The rest is out of your hands.

www.danceextreme.com

Chasing our dreams of dance

Submitted by Dance Steps

For some, dance is their childhood hobby that keeps them active and engaged. But for others, it doesn't stop there, as they hope to pursue dance as their lifelong career.

This year, Dance Steps is thrilled that two of their young dancers will be attending professional dance schools in the summer season. Caroline Derhak, age 10, will be attending the Royal Winnipeg Professional Ballet Program, and Demetria Havaris, age 16, will be attending Canada's Ballet Jorgen in Toronto.

"I'm really excited for everything at RWB, and I'm going to bring my favourite stuffed Teddy Bear with me," says Caroline.

In addition to the students attending professional schools for the summer, Dance Steps also has two graduating students who have chosen to pursue post-secondary dance. Hannah Raymond, age 18, will be attending York University in the fall for Dance. Diana Hong, age 18, has been accepted to Ballet Jorgen's 2-Year Dance Performance Program.

Dance Steps is also extremely proud of its former students who continue their passion for dance today. Nicolas Noguera, a Dance Steps alumnus, is about to begin his fourth and final year of dance at the prestigious school of Juilliard in New York.

"Dance was the first thing to really show me the benefits of persistence [...] and now dance has become a way for me to define my own sense of beauty," says Nic. "Something really unique about Dance Steps that prepared me to pursue dance professionally is that they offer performance opportunities outside of just competing. I think there's something really special about performing for the sake of sharing."

Dance Steps is so proud of its students and can't wait to see what the future holds for each of them. At the same time, for the studio's other dancers who love to dance but want to remain closer to home, they will be excitedly attending Dance Steps' summer camps and evening dance classes here in London.

www.dancestepsldn.com

Nicolas Noguera, a former Dance Steps student, is beginning his fourth and final year of dance at the prestigious school of Juilliard in New York.

Dance Steps prepares students for outstanding dance opportunities as they progress. Caroline Derhak, for instance, is attending the Royal Winnipeg Professional Ballet Program this summer.

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Submitted by London Minor Football Association

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The LMFA season runs from August to the end of October, leaving time for other sports such as soccer or basketball. Many studies have shown that playing multiple sports benefits young athletes.

Please visit www.lmfafootball.ca or call 519-852-4465 for more information on joining a team this fall!

www.lmfafootball.ca

The London Minor Football Association (LMFA) has enjoyed a long history (more than 60 years!) of providing football development opportunities for young athletes in the region, preparing them for high school football while also creating football fans for life!

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Calendar of Events

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July 12
Tackling First Time Fishing, Fanshawe Conservation Area

July 12-14
Annual London Tecumsehs Baseball Tournament Week 1, Stronach Fields

July 13-14
SPO Senior Circuit, Slo Pitch City

July 14
MEC London Century Ride, Toboggan Brewery

July 17
Hutton House's 22nd Annual Charity Golf Classic, West Haven Golf and Country Club

July 18
30th Annual Make-A-Wish Golf Tournament, Sunningdale Golf & Country Club

July 19
Summer Night 5K Walk, Run & Kiddie Trot for The Bereaved Families of Ontario, Barking Frog

July 19-21
Monster Truck Throwdown, Delaware Speedway

July 19-21
Tincaps Mosquito Tournament, Byron Optimist Sports Complex

July 19-21
Annual London Tecumsehs Baseball Tournament Week 2, Stronach Fields

July 20
9th Annual Rug-Rat Back Pack Beach Volleyball Tournament, Port Stanley

July 20-21 & 27-28
St Thomas Soccerfest, Athletic/Cowan Park, St Thomas

July 20-21
SPO Super Series, Slo Pitch City

July 22
Sal Bruni Memorial Golf Tournament, West Haven Golf and Country Club

July 27
5th Addison Hall Memorial Ride, Victory Branch Legion #317

July 27
Strathroy United FC 2019 Invitational Soccer Festival,Various Strathroy Fields

July 27-28
PWC MS Bike Tours, Grand Bend to London

August 3-4
Summer Championship, Slo Pitch City

August 7
38th Annual London North Rotary Golf Tournament, Fanshawe Golf Club

August 9
5th Annual Help Us Give Smiles Golf Tournament, Maple Ridge Golf Course

August 9
Reach The Beach, GT's in Port Stanley

August 10-11
SPO Super Series, Slo Pitch City

August 16
Special Olympics Golf Tournament, Maple Ridge Golf Course

August 17
5K Foam Fest Fun Run, Boler Mountain

August 17
Knights of Columbus Council 11053, St. John Divine Parish, London 6th Annual Golf Tournament, Fire Rock Golf Club

August 17-18
Hoop Fest Canada, Covent Garden Market

August 20
16th Annual Trudell Medical Marketing Limited/St. Joseph's Healthcare Urology Golf Tournament, Sunningdale Golf & Country Club

August 30
Krown Rust Control Night, Delaware Speedway

August 31-September 1
John Henderson Memorial Soccer Tournament, Various London fields

September 2
Western Mustangs Football vs Queens, TD Stadium

September 6
Jordan's Run The Runway, London Airport-Diamond Aricraft

September 7
MEC London Race Two: 5K, 10K, Half Marathon, Fanshawe Conservation Area

September 7
Fanshawe Women & Mens Soccer vs Sheridan Bruins, Fanshawe College

September 9
The May Court Club of London Golf Tournament, Forest City National

September 13-14
Great Canadian Race Weekend, Delaware Speedway

September 14
Western Mustangs Football vs Carleton, TD Stadium

September 14
3rd Annual Dad Club London Golf Tournament, Pine Knot Golf Course

September 14
That Dam Hill, Springbank Park

September 15
12th Annual Oakridge Optimist Charity Golf Tournament, Fire Rock Golf Club

September 15
Terry Fox Run, Springbank Gardens

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Oct 15 USA - $119

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Oct 20 Minnesota Vikings - $259
Oct 27 New York Giants - $259
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Concussion? Rest isn't recovery

Submitted by Pro Function Sports Injury Clinic

PRO FUNCTION sports injury clinic

Over the last few years, scientific research has shown that rest alone is not an effective plan of management for a concussion – and may, in fact, delay proper treatment. Proper management of a concussion involves early intervention and treatment, especially when the goal is a sustainable return to sport. Symptoms can go away in days, but a full recovery could take several weeks. More than 30% of concussions do not fully resolve and patients continue to experience long-term symptoms.

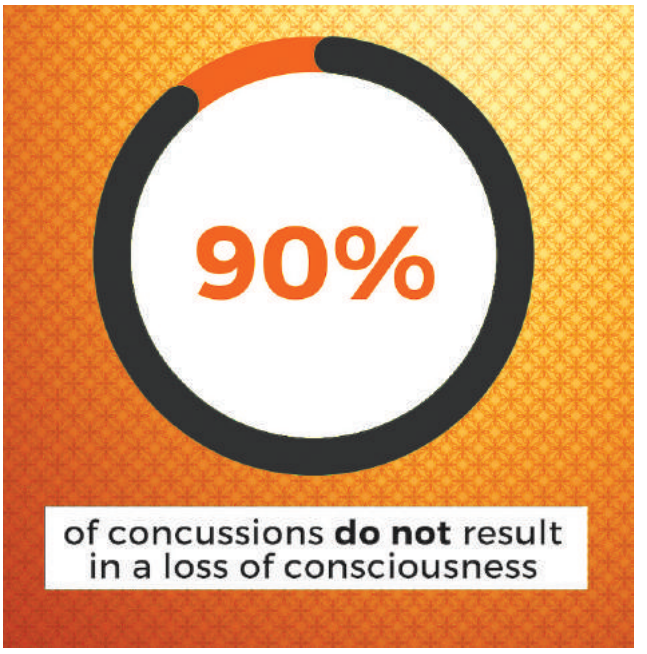
What are the symptoms of a concussion?

Diagnosing a concussion involves an in-depth examination of health history and a series of physical, visual, and exertion tests. At onset, symptoms of a concussion can include:

- Dizziness
- Headache
- Balance
- Visual/auditory sensitivity
- Neck pain
- Loss of consciousness (only approximately 10% of cases)

If you suspect that you or your child might have a concussion, give Pro Function a call and we will quickly book you a full 75-minute Concussion Assessment. Get in touch by phone at 519-860-5090 or by email at info@profunction.ca.

www.profunction.ca



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Laser Quest hits the streets

Contributions by Shannon Polci, Laser Quest London

What do laser tag and street hockey have in common? A lot for a group of kids who play at Laser Quest London and formed a ball hockey team to take part in tournaments in the region.

Most of these kids had never been part of the same team before. The solution? A Laser Quest party. That provided the opportunity for them to get to know each other. After playing a solo game, they joined together for a team game and quickly began working together and developing a sense of comradery.

The Laser Quest party proved to be a fantastic team-building exercise. They created a bond amongst each other, and friendships formed. And they took that dynamic into the GOT GAME Street Hockey Tournament, which was held the weekend of May 18-19 at Victoria Park.

> "The Laser Quest party proved to be a fantastic team-building exercise. They created a bond amongst each other...and they took that dynamic into the GOT GAME Street Hockey Tournament."

The team had a great time – on and off the rink – at the tourney. They played four games during the GOT GAME weekend, including three on the Saturday and one on Sunday. They came out victorious once on Saturday after a solid team effort, and they fell just short in a hard-fought game on Sunday.

And how did the tournament contribute to the team's sense of comradery? They're friends for life!

The GOT GAME event, which also included a poutine festival and sports expo, proved to be a great experience for the Laser Quest London team. And they quickly improved as a team. They've since competed in other street/ball hockey tournaments, and they've officially combined their love of laser tag with a love of street hockey!

www.laserquest.com

Photo by Allison Mol: Top: Noah Grant, Caden Mol, Gavin Wagter-Barnum, Jaden Bulmer, Brandon Prust, Clint Householder, Robet Palmer (Coach). Middle: Chase Lingille, Kenzie Polci, Jakob Mooder, Remi Rexer-Palmer, Mikey Polci. Bottom: Hunter Roberson-Beck

Photo by Danielle Mooder: Left to Right: Robert Palmer, Mikey Polci, Jaden Bulmer, Clint Householder, Remi Rexer-Palmer, Stajan Woolner, Jakob Mooder, Caden Mol, Noah Grant, Gavin Wagter-Barnum and Hunter Roberson-Beck (Goalie)

Busy offseason in the community

Submitted by Komoka Kings

The Komoka Kings remain active in the community even after the final whistle of the season.

Recently, two of the team's players pitched in on Tim Hortons Camp Day on Wednesday, June 5th at the Komoka Tim's, owned by Erik Stoyanovich, to show the Kings' support for the community and for the Camp Day program.

The Camps support kids from disadvantaged circumstances (between ages 12 to 16) at a time in their lives when they are determining who they will become as adults. The Tim Hortons program teaches these kids skills like leadership, resilience and responsibility, allowing them to believe in their own potential and change their stories for the better.

This is much in the same way that a hockey team, like the Komoka Kings, does in the offseason, improving their skills and bolstering their ranks to not only improve upon the stories of each player, but also improve the team as a whole.

The Komoka Kings have acquired, thus far, two new players for the upcoming season – Christian Kyrou from Komoka and Will Lewis from London.

"The team is still in a state of flux as we reshape, rebuild and retool the roster and the Kings' organization and build upon our success this past season, which included a phenomenal playoff run for the Komoka Kings," said owner and GM Roop Chanderdat. "Getting better on the ice and behind the scenes will provide a more exciting and involved fan experience."

Off the ice, meanwhile, the team is also getting more active.

"We are planning on being more involved in many more community events during the summer months to raise awareness that we have a top-drawer Junior B team in the heart of Komoka and that we'd love to have more fan support at our games," said Don Adams, the Kings' sponsorship, events and volunteer coordinator. "The Komoka Kings organization is proud to be a part of the community, and we hope our efforts show that we are here to stay for years to come. To do that, we need fans in the stands at all of our games.

"During the season we will have a number of events, for the entire family, promoting various community programs that will run in tandem during our home games. It's definitely going to be an exciting season for the Kings and for the community."

www.komokakings.com

It may be the offseason, but the Komoka Kings are still busy, as the players have been out in the community, showing their support for various programs – including Camp Day at Tim Hortons, where they volunteered for the day.

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MILLARS

Confronting sexual abuse in sport

Submitted by Millars Law

"I Never Thought It Could Happen to my Child ..."

That's what was said by the mother of a child who suffered traumatizing sexual abuse at the hands of Larry Nassar, a convicted child molester who was the USA Gymnastics national team doctor (and a physician at Michigan State University).

Judge Rosemarie Aquilina was particularly harsh in her condemnation of the serial pedophile, saying the following when pronouncing her sentence:

"I just signed your death warrant, as you will spend the rest of your life in jail."

Seldom do we see such harsh sentences in Canada, but sadly we do see similar abuse tragedies in youth sports when parents and clubs do not pay attention.

The vast majority of coaches in our youth sports clubs are, of course, selfless volunteers who dedicate their time and energy to children who greatly benefit from their expertise. However, in today's society, we must ensure that we never take our kids' safety for granted simply because a coach says the right things to us. In fact, predators become experts at manipulating parents to gain their trust in order to secure access to children.

In part, Nassar was able to continue this abuse unchecked for years because no one thought that a doctor – and parent of girls – could be the author of abuse. Young athletes tried to speak up, but no one listened. If you're a parent or a coach and your athlete tries to tell you something: LISTEN to them, BELIEVE them, and DO SOMETHING.

At Millars, we would like to share a few tips to help protect all children, coaches and clubs from the terror of dealing with sexual assault cases.

Clubs must have clear policies that should provide guidelines for coaches that include:

- Coaches should never be alone with a child.
- Club staff are forbidden from physical contact ... including hugs.
- Administrative staff must ensure that criminal record checks are updated annually.
- Club leadership must document and respond to the smallest of complaints so that there is a record of suspicious activity that could reveal a pattern.
- Club leadership must not be scared to remove a coach if there is an issue. Good coaches don't have multiple complaints ... conclusive proof of problems often comes too late, and clubs will be in trouble if they fail to act.

MILLARS LAWYERS
"I NEVER THOUGHT IT COULD HAPPEN TO MY CHILD"
How to protect your children from sex assault.
(519) 657-1LAW | info@millarslaw.com

Coaches should have their own policies and share them with parents and kids:

- Share club rules/policies.
- Protect yourself by having witnesses during one-on-one coaching sessions.
- Never go into a child's hotel room alone and be careful offering to give a ride to one child alone.
- Leave medical treatment to the professionals. No massages ... ever.
- Discuss child safety with the parents and their children together and create a safe environment for the reporting of issues to promote transparency.
- Don't flirt with parents at the risk of being on the receiving end of the other parents' wrath (false accusations can come from anywhere).
- Even if your student becomes an adult, if you are having a relationship with them you will be open to risk, as you are in a position of trust that was established at a younger age. Avoid unnecessary risk and keep romance and your sport separate.

Parents:

- Let your kids know that it is ALWAYS okay for them to tell you anything – even if another adult says they will get in trouble. In fact, emphasize with them that if an adult ever tells them they will get in trouble for speaking, that is when it is most important that they tell you.
- Be present; predators are less likely to target kids with attentive parents.
- Do not take kindness as a pure sign of good intent; stay vigilant.
- Single parents should be especially suspicious of men/women who offer to take a role in their child's life; these are ideal conditions for grooming when a parent is overwhelmed and needs help. Predators are on the hunt for vulnerable targets of opportunity.

The bottom line is that child abuse happens in every sport, as predators will always be drawn to places where vulnerable children can be found. Be positive but vigilant and watch over all the kids for men or women who appear unusually interested in helping children.

No one thinks it can happen to their child, but after the fact it is too late to be angry. Watch this video of Judge Aquilina's harsh words to this child predator: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=odzF_L3Eir8

It is often shocking to see how some parents can actually turn a blind eye to abuse allegations because their coach is too influential in their own kids' sports success. We have seen this too many times.

If you have a question, concern, or even a suspicion of abuse, give us a call. Millars Law represents victims of sexual assault across Canada. We have the experience to dig a little deeper and find answers hidden beneath the veneer of politeness. Call **MILLARS LAW** today for a **FREE CONSULTATION at 519-657-1LAW**.

www.millarslaw.com

Unfinished business ahead

Submitted by the London Nationals

The London Nationals are not finished; four straight conference titles, while impressive, was never the goal.

Coming off a heartbreaking loss in overtime of game seven in the Sutherland Cup final, the Nationals must look to regroup and rebuild for the year ahead. Returning players shouldn't dwell on the past, while new players should look to make their mark on an already storied franchise. There will be significant roster change, with several notable names aging out or moving on to other leagues. But while it is still unclear exactly who will stay and who will go, the team has wasted no time in signing several highly sought-after prospects, including Nathan Small, Michael McKnight, Jacob Chantler, and Joey Studnicka.

Who are they? What will they bring to the team? Nationals Head Coach and General Manager, Patrick Powers, has nothing but praise and hopeful optimism for each one of them.

That includes Nathan Small, a Dorchester native, who previously played for the Elgin-Middlesex Chiefs. He was the top defenceman in the league, notching six goals and 37 assists in 34 games played.

"Nathan is a smooth skating, elite puck moving defenceman who will help generate offence on the back end – both five-on-five and on the powerplay," said Powers. "He's a very well-rounded defenceman who uses his extremely high hockey IQ to see plays before they develop."

Michael McKnight, meanwhile, also spent the past season with the Elgin-Middlesex Chiefs, where he was the team's leading scorer (16 goals, 27 assists in 33 games played) before joining the Nationals for the end of their playoff run.

"Michael is an aggressive up and down the wall winger with explosive speed who uses his body well to generate space," said Powers. "He has an elite shot which we expect will help him become a very versatile offensive player. He's a character young man who ingrained himself well into our dressing room during the Sutherland Cup final this [past] season."

Jacob Chantler, another member of the Elgin-Middlesex Chiefs, posted an impressive 13 goals and 15 assists in his 35 games played this past season.

"Jacob is a big body with a tenacious work ethic," Powers said. "He will be a very important part of the team at the faceoff dot, where he has shown an ability to win big faceoffs on a regular basis. Jacob will very quickly gain the attention of the opposing team with his aggressive style of play."

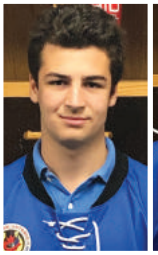
And how about Joey Studnicka? He was the first signing of the offseason from the London Junior Knights.

"Joey is a fast-skating forward who loves to possess the puck," said Powers. "He's an elusive player who will generate offence both on the rush and low in the offensive zone. Joey was acclimatized to the GOJHL during the playoffs this year with the St. Thomas Stars, so his transition to the league should be minimal."

With more signings to come, and inevitable moves before the trade deadline, there is no telling what will become of the Nationals' 2019/2020 roster. Only one thing is certain: a fifth straight conference title is not the goal, because the London Nationals are not finished.

www.londonnationals.on.ca

Jacob Chantler


Michael McKnight

Joey Studnicka

Nathan Small

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McMichael, Guskov chosen in draft

By Greg Parkington and photos by Matt Hiscox Photography

As the NHL season came to an end and the St. Louis Blues were crowned Stanley Cup Champions, the league swiftly turned its focus to the future and the new crop of talent waiting to realize their NHL dreams. The 2019 edition of the NHL draft took place June 21 & 22 in Vancouver, British Columbia and saw over 200 junior hockey players from around the world drafted by NHL teams. As the draft unfolded, two London Knights were selected, as their dreams became reality.

Connor McMichael – Centre

Connor McMichael joined the Knights during the 2017-2018 season at Trade Deadline (from the eventual OHL Champion Hamilton Bulldogs, for Rob Thomas, current St. Louis Blues rookie sensation and Stanley Cup Champion).

A former first round pick in the OHL Priority Selection, McMichael had a slow start to his OHL career (just 16 points). However, the Ajax, Ontario native proceeded to prove all his doubters wrong with a monster sophomore season, finishing with 72 points (36 goals, 36 assists) to lead the way among all Knights who played with the team all year (overager Kevin Hancock, who joined London from Owen Sound, was tops in scoring overall). McMichael's play, and his consistent praise by many NHL scouts as the smartest player in the draft, rocketed him up NHL prospect rankings (he finished the year ranked 24th by NHL Central Scouting).

Come draft day, McMichael didn't have to wait long to hear his name called. The Washington Capitals made him their first pick (25th overall). The Capitals have drafted many players Knights players in the past – most notably, John Carlson and Tim Taylor. Washington is also where Knights head coach Dale Hunter spent most of his playing career in the NHL (and returned, in 2011-12, to serve as the team's head coach).

The Minnesota Wild selected Matvey Guskov in the fifth round of this year's NHL Draft (149th overall).

Connor McMichael was chosen by the Washington Capitals with the 25th pick overall at the 2019 NHL Draft, which was held June 21-22 in Vancouver, BC.

Matvey Guskov – Centre

This past season was Matvey Guskov's first in North America, as he'd spent his entire life in Russia prior to this past fall. He was a prominent offensive threat across Russia's junior leagues, and while playing for his home nation internationally, including at the World Junior A Challenge last fall. The Nizhnekamsk, Russia native, who was a highly touted international prospect, was the Knights' first round selection (42nd overall) in last summer's CHL Import Draft.

Guskov found instant chemistry with McMichael and Nathan Dunkley, notching his first OHL goal and adding two assists in his first OHL game. Despite the fast start, however, time spent away from the team plus injury trouble prevented Guskov from having the season he'd hoped for. He finished the year with only 30 points (12 goals, 18 assists), which was still good for second in team rookie scoring. Guskov has a ton of offensive upside, and London fans can attest to his love of putting the puck in the back of the net.

In the fifth round with the 149th pick, the Minnesota Wild selected Guskov. This was the second time in three years the Wild selected a player from the Knights (they took Jacob Golden 147th overall in 2017). Guskov joins only a handful of former Knights to join the Wild – including Golden, Dante Salituro, Kyle Quincey, and Dan Fritsche.

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Club well-represented at Nationals

Submitted by London Annihilators Wheelchair Rugby

The London Annihilators capped off another great season with a successful 2019 National Wheelchair Rugby Championship in Ottawa, Ontario. This year, athletes from London represented Ontario on all four Ontario teams entered in the competition. The two Ontario teams in Division 1 finished 2nd and 4th, respectively, with London athletes Cody Caldwell, Eric Rodrigues, Mike Whitehead and Shayne Smith all being named to the all-tournament team.

London Annihilators player Cody Caldwell joined three of his local teammates in being named to the all-tournament team while competing for Team Ontario in Division 1 at the 2019 National Wheelchair Rugby

In the 'B,' Ontario's two teams finished 1st and 4th, respectively, with the Ontario Storm winning the Division 2 National Championship for 2019. Nick Kovac was named to the all-tournament team, while Rio Kanda Kovac came home with MVP honours, an unprecedented achievement for a rookie player competing in his first National Championship!

A number of London Annihilator athletes who were previously selected to the Canadian National team are now preparing for an upcoming trip to Misawa, Japan. There, they will compete against the #1-ranked Japanese team in a series of friendly matches to help them prepare for the Pan-American games that happen in August in Peru.

The Annihilators would like to thank all of our family, volunteers, fans and sponsors who made all of the successes this season possible. You can continue to follow your London athletes on their quest for gold in Peru at:
www.wheelchairrugby.ca

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